

TRANSACTION No. ~~88~~ 66

aca 1504
906.97127
F5600
H5
FEBRUARY 9th, 1904

THE HISTORICAL AND SCIENTIFIC
SOCIETY OF MANITOBA



AMONG THE MOUND
BUILDERS' REMAINS



Cup found in Mound at Rainy River, Aug. 22nd, 1884.

BY

GEORGE BRYCE, LL.D.

A Life Member of the Society

HASS.



3

10/10/10

PREFACE

The Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba published several papers by the Author in description of visits among the remains of the Mound Builders of the Canadian West. The demand for these pamphlets has been such that they are now out of print. With the authority of the Society these, with another related paper of the Author, are now reprinted. No doubt, having been written at intervals of several years, they may repeat a number of statements, but the Society desires them to appear again as they were first printed. They embrace:—

- I. Opening of a Mound at St. Andrew's, Red River, (Oct. 1879).

(Printed in the Author's "Manitoba," London, 1879).

- II. Excavation of Great Mound, Rainy River, (Aug. 22, 1884).

(Printed as "The Mound Builders." Transaction No. 18, Winnipeg, 1885).

- III. The Souris Country: Its Monuments, Mounds, Forts and Rivers." Visited Sept. 7th, 1886, and a mound opened.

(Printed as Translation 24, Winnipeg, 1887).

Winnipeg, Feb. 9th, 1904.

THE HISTORICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY OF MANITOBA

Among the Mound Builders' Remains

I. Opening of a Mound at St. Andrew's Red River

(October, 1879.)

In the City of Winnipeg, near Fort Garry, there was formerly to be seen a circular mound. Another exists on the second river-terrace, on the banks of Red River, some twelve miles to the north of the foregoing. About two miles above the town of Selkirk, on the east bank of the river, a third mound has been observed, while two miles from Winnipeg, on the banks of the Assiniboine, another could at one time be seen. The mound which we shall describe is situated on the west bank of the Red River, about seventeen miles north of Winnipeg.

Most of these mounds have the following features:—

1. On a prominent point along the river system of the country.
2. Circular.
3. Range from 50 to 150 feet in diameter.
4. Generally some six to ten feet in depth at the deepest part.

Much speculation is naturally rife as to the origin, date of construction, and object of these mounds. The mounds found in America farther south, such as those on the Ohio river, and built in the form of a serpent, a bird or a fox, and hundreds of yards in length, have plainly been for defence in time of war. The general current of opinion in regard to the circular mound is, that sepulture was its purpose. The hope of finding something as to the social condition, habits and life of the aborigines of the country, draws many of an inquiring disposition to take an interest in searching these mounds. The archæologist, too, finds a subject of study in the mound, inasmuch as it speaks to him of a race having the building faculty—a faculty which seems to be seldom found among the Indians of the continent in the present day. The *tumulus*

VICTOR LAYOR
ADAM

may thus speak of a race now extinct; if this be so, perhaps of a people unconnected with the present Indian population of the continent; perhaps of a people of greater civilization than the present race, who had found their way from that seed-bed of the nations of Europe—its north-west coast.


In October, 1879, the officers and members of the Historical Society of Manitoba entered upon the work of examining the mound, to which reference has been made. It is worthy of note that a certain amount of superstition fills the minds of the Indians and half-bloods in the neighborhood of these mounds, as to any disturbance of them, a proof that they regard them as burial-mounds. In the case of one of the mounds mentioned, a native intending to erect a small farm-building upon it, having excavated a cellar, came upon human bones in doing so, when he religiously re-interred them, and erected his building elsewhere. Before opening the present mound, the native owners of the property were consulted, and consented somewhat unwillingly, one in giving his consent saying he did not think it right to open it all.

Members of the Society gathered from some of the old native women living in the vicinity

THE LEGEND OF THE MOUND.

"Many years ago," said one of the old women born about the beginning of the century, "her people told her their tribe was living at Netley Creek (a creek running into Lake Winnipeg), and the mound was inhabited by people calling themselves 'Mandrills.' They were cave-dwellers, and belonged to a race then very few in number. They had been visited by one of her tribe, and were found to be dying with small-pox; the Indian was alarmed, dreading the scourge of the red man, and avoiding the place went over to the east side of the river, on his hunt for several days, and skirted along the small streams running into Red River from the east. On his return he passed the mound dwelling, when he found that it had fallen in and there was no trace of a Mandrill left. The Indians had never known any of this race in the country since."

This is plainly an unsophisticated story, and as we shall see afterwards is a strange misinterpretation of a few simple facts. The Society having procured the assistance of a strong force of excavators, went carefully to work to make a thorough examination. The mound, at one time a short distance from the bank of the river, has now, by the falling in of the soft alluvial soil of which the bank is composed, only about half the super-



ficial extent it once had. The part now left is nearly semi-circular, and its radius about forty feet. During the present generation, it is stated that bones have been seen projecting from its river-ward face, and have been found in the debris at the bottom of the bank. The earth of which the mound is composed is that of the black surface mould found surrounding it. The situation of the mound is where a low, flattish ridge runs into the river from the plain, and from the gently rising crest of this ridge, the earth for the mound was probably taken. The mound is plainly of artificial origin, though no trace of excavation is to be seen.

Another fact is worthy of notice, viz., that several excavations had been already made in the mound, some of these by observers for the Smithsonian Institution, some from mere curiosity, and one by two young medical students, seeking bones for the purposes of study. The workmen, under the direction of officers of the Society, began at the brink and dug away the earth as deep as the original soil, throwing what they removed down the bank. They thus cleared all before them, and the earth was carefully observed as it was removed.

Before proceeding very far it was plain that unless care were taken to see the part of the mound from which the remains came there might be such a confusion as would render all results valueless. Indeed, not only does the observer need a good eye, but a reasoning faculty as well to bring up the various disturbing elements that may enter in. For instance, the possibility arose that supposing the mound to have been one of early sepulture, later interments might have taken place in it. When the body of a sailor is found thrown up on the sea shore after a storm, the coastmen will bury it beside a stone or near a spot marked by some striking object; so the Indian finding a burial-mound of earlier times, may be disposed to bury his dead upon it. With this thought in the mind of the writer, a close watch was kept to distinguish the original from later and superficial interments.

As expected, a large number of bones was found near the surface of the mound, about a foot beneath it. It may be well to describe these first. The remains did not consist of skeletons in regular order, but seemingly of skulls laid around in a circular form; of a dozen or two of thigh bones placed together, then of other bones of the same part, a new lot of skulls, and so on. From actual count there were enough of skulls to represent upwards of thirty distinct skeletons. The bones seemed to be those of warriors; for in the case of one skull lying face downward, drawn out with care by the writer,

there was in the cast of the face, which remained distinctly marked in the soil, the deep red color evidently retained from the red ochre which had been used to daub the face of the brave going on the war-path. Another skull had on the back of it a deep ding, with the bone cracked and driven inward, such as would have resulted from a heavy blow from the weighty stone hammer-like weapon, which, swung by the



H—POTTERY CUP NOW IN POSSESSION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY.
(Not complete.)

thick leathern handle, is known to have been used in Indian warfare. Further, this did not seem the original place of burial of the bones, for not only were they arranged, as we have said, in series of the same kind of bones from different individuals, but in one or two instances the eye-sockets in the skulls were filled with a whitish clay entirely different from the soil of the mound. The presumption would seem to be that the remains were those of braves, for they seemed to be of full-grown persons, brought from a distance, perhaps gath-

ered from a battlefield, and the dismembered bones interred in groups. The "femur" bones were in some cases curved, indicating that the Indians thus buried when alive had been plain Indians, and accustomed to ride on horses.

With these bones were buried certain articles showing the state of advancement of the Indians. There were lumps of red ochre, plainly for purposes of painting; there were likewise bits of charcoal mingled with the bones, but no trace of burning was observable on the bones examined. Pieces of broken pottery were also found with the usual markings. These seem to have belonged to pots or vessels used in cookery. The stage of art was rude; the soft clay had evidently been marked with little skill or care, and the work done by hand. Probably, the most interesting objects found among these bones were two tubes, the one about six inches long, the other two, and of about half an inch in diameter. These tapered slightly, and are made of a soft, dark grey, or blackish stone. Their object is not very evident. At one end of each there are raised rings, and on one, between the rings, the tube is evidently much worn by teeth, the tooth-marks being quite perceptible. They could not have been used as smoking pipes, being straight. Schoolcraft, an authority on Indian customs, asserts instruments of this kind to have been used by the Sagamores for looking at the stars, but the presence of tooth-marks renders it unlikely that these were used for that purpose. Other Indian authorities state that tubes of various kinds were used by the "medicine-men" in removing disease. The conjurer placed the tube on the diseased member, and seizing the end of the tube adapted for the mouth in his teeth, proceeded to suck away the disease. The size and appearance of these tubes would agree very well with such a use.

Leaving this part of the mound with its superficial interments, some of the workmen had, a few feet further to the north, struck upon a number of flat stones, lying in an imbricated manner in three layers, the uppermost being a foot or more below the surface of the mound. These heavy stones were each two feet square and four or five inches in depth. They were of the Silurian limestone found at the foot of the river bank, where, since, quarries have been opened. The workmen were directed to clear off the earth, and leave the stones undisturbed. This done, a surface some thirty square feet in extent was exposed. Some of the observers, with the legend in mind, suggested that the stones were very much in the position they would have been had the stone chimney of a dwelling been toppled over and covered in the falling ruins of a cave. This, however, was, on closer observation,

seen to be pure nonsense, as so many of the guesses are of hasty disciples of science.

The stones were next removed, and under the centre of them, two feet below them, and some four feet and a half from the surface of the mound an excavator struck directly on the top of a skull. The earth was carefully removed from about it and this proved to be a skeleton in an erect sitting posture, the arm-bones on each side of the skull, and the bones of the legs drawn up, and the knees nearly on a level with the face. The skeleton had plainly never been disturbed, a matter secured by the thirty flat stones lying like a solid cover above the tomb. No traces of swathing around were found, the bones being imbedded in the soil of the mound. The erect, well-postured skeleton, so carefully protected by the flat stone covering, dispelled any suggestion of the skeleton having been entombed by accident. The skull was taken out with great care, but was in a very different state of preservation from those found in the upper interments. It was of a brownish colour, loose in texture, breaking at the touch, and was long and narrow in shape. The skeleton was perfect so far as the larger bones are concerned. The only relics or objects of interest were found on the right side of the skeleton, and on the floor of the burying-place. These consisted of a simple ornament of shell, apparently that of a common unio, somewhat squared and pierced by two circular holes placed symmetrically; and some fifteen small round shells three-quarters of an inch in diameter, seemingly of a species of natica. The ornament was plainly a necklace. The bones seemed to be those of a female, and the presence of the ornament with the absence of all weapons confirmed this view.

There had sat in loneliness, for how many centuries who can say, and of what race or nation who can tell, the tenant of the mound, undisturbed by the ravenous beast unable to penetrate the stony covering, untouched by the ruthless hands of the mere curiosity-hunter, till the votaries of science, with reverent spirit and seeking for knowledge, had come to discover the secrets of the tomb.

Nearer to the brink than the skeleton just described so securely protected by the layers of stone, another skeleton had been found on the low level of the base of the mound. It was lying near the line of excavation made by those persons referred to who, from mere curiosity, had cut into the mound. Stones of the same kind as those covering the upright skeleton were found with this. The remains were seemingly in a

sitting posture, but a portion of one leg was wanting, and this near the excavation mentioned. The skull had been twisted out of its original position by the weight of stone lying against it. A second small skeleton, apparently that of a child, was found close beside this, but the confusion produced either by previous diggers or by the pressure of the stones made it impossible to come to any reliable conclusion, except that the flat stones were chiefly above and around the skeletons. These seemed of similar age to the erect skeleton.

No implements, pottery, paint, nor charcoal were found accompanying these remains. The only thing found was what had possibly been a shell for ornament similar to that described, but it was much broken. It will be remembered that half the mound was gone, so that there may have been other, what we may call, base interments in the lost parts of the mound.

Having given a description of the objects found, it now remains to give a theory which may satisfactorily include the facts. In doing so, whatever is said is in a spirit of hesitation. The whole subject of the mound builders is involved in mystery, though a good deal of attention has been paid to it by a number of observers in the United States.

First, then, who were the people who made the earlier interments represented by the two full-grown skeletons and that of the child? The erect skeleton was buried facing the east. This has been taken by archaeologists, in discussing Scandinavian and Celtic remains, to indicate a difference between Christian and pagan times. As, however, the eastern view was that towards the river, it would not be wise to make much of this. The other skeletons were in so confused a state that nothing could be inferred from their posture. The absence of all utensils of cookery or means of livelihood, such as are found in the graves of ~~some~~ Indians even to the present day, would indicate to some a higher faith than that of the savage who thinks he is but transferred to another hunting-ground when death overtakes him.

The presence of the heavy shells of natica in the necklace would point out travellers from the sea. The construction of the mound is very similar to that of those found in the north of Europe, and the fewness of the bodies buried would seem to indicate either a people in course of transit, or a people dying out, if it be not granted that distinguished individuals were thus buried. In any case, a vast amount of labour must have been spent in these early times even in

throwing up one mound. Would it be too much to hazard the suggestion that the remains may have been those of wandering bands of sea-faring adventurers, of whom we are beginning to learn more, as having some six or eight centuries ago visited the shores, and even penetrated the interior of the North American continent? Perhaps the route of Lord Selkirk's colonists by Hudson's Bay had been centuries before opened up by the sea-king voyageurs.

Leaving in the meantime this question, it may be well to look at that of the later remains found in the superficial interments. It would naturally be in connection with these that the legend given would be told. What are the main points of the story? That the Mandrills live in the mound as a cave dwelling. Now the cave-dwellers of the Missouri met by Catlin were called the Mandans. They are a tribe now nearly extinct. The Red River country was visited by Missouri Indians, and the Missouri country by Northern Indians, by means of the prairie trail, still known as the Missouri trail. Carver, in speaking of Fort La Reine, on the Assiniboine, says, "To this place the Mahahs, who inhabit a country 250 miles south-west, come also to trade with them; and bring great quantities of Indian corn to exchange for knives, tomahawks, and other articles." We have seen that the early explorers reached the same Missouri country by ascending a branch of the Assiniboine.

The name Mandrill, as also Mahah, is plainly a corruption of the word Mandan. Strange to say, the bulk of the Mandans, who were a dwindling, peaceful race, unable to cope with the wild Sioux, but by far the most advanced of the North American Indians in the arts of building and agriculture, actually perished on the Missouri, within the last half-century, by the smallpox. What more probable than that some outlying colony of Mandans, bringing their customs from the Missouri, had made earth-houses for themselves, in the Red River country, and had used the mound as a place of burial? As to the part of the legend referring to the small-pox, it would be most natural to have it attached by association of ideas to the mound, although the deaths by this pestilence may have occurred long after the use of the mound as a burial-place by the Mandans.

As to the mound being inhabited by cave-dwellers, the facts brought out by the excavation entirely disprove such a hypothesis. Sepulture was plainly its purpose. That the connecting of small-pox with the mound is a recent notion, is shown by the presence in the surface of the mound of painted

faces, broken skulls, indicating a violent death and not one by the pestilence, while the well-known fear of the Indians for this terrible disease forbids the thought of their laying the bones in the systematic order in which they were found. Another question arising is, why may not these superficial interments be those of Sioux, Ojibeways, or Crees, buried in the mound?? The answer is, that these nations have their own distinctive modes of burial, all differing from that of the mound. They either bury their dead by exposing them on raised platforms, or on the branches of trees, or in the case of the Ojibeways, by burial in separate graves dug in the earth, and covered over with sticks some two feet in length, placed together in the form of a roof.

The Mandans would seem to have regarded these mounds as the tombs of their ancestors. Nothing could be more fitting than that their heroes slain in battle should receive an honourable burial in these "sacred spots" of their race. If the Mandans be taken as having a peculiar connexion with these mounds, it may be well to notice some interesting facts regarding them mentioned by Catlin and others. The Mandans were not only far advanced as to living in fixed abodes, in having fortified villages, in cultivating the soil, in the manufacture of pottery—an art said by Catlin to have been confined to them among the North American Indians during this century—and in the practice of religious rites of a more elaborate kind than the other Indian tribes, but many of the tribe had light whitish hair and blue and grey eyes. A few Mandans are still said to survive on the upper Missouri, and they bear the name "White Beards." To one acquainted with the Indian nations, it is well-known that a full-blooded Indian, unless a monster, can have only black hair and a dark eye.

The Mandans have been traced, by their mounds for fortification, for burial, for sacrifice, and for observation, along the Ohio, and far up the Missouri. The point at which the nation dwelt on the Missouri, in 1838, when they were so almost completely destroyed by small-pox, was reached by the Missouri trail from the Red River country. Their possession of arts mentioned, and more especially the recurrence among them of numerous cases of light complexion, would seem to indicate the mixture of an element of Caucasian ancestry in the tribe. Up to this century they were unknown to the present white population of the continent. A considerable number of writers have, in consequence, considered them the descendants of early European adventurers, absorbed in an Indian alliance.

It is remarkable that many writers on the early history of the American continent have referred to the early expedition of Prince Madoc, of North Wales, with ten ships to the new world, in the twelfth century. Powell, a writer, dating back to 1620, gives an account of this. Hakluyt and others have continued the story, although Woodward, in his "History of Wales," regards it as purely mythical. Whoever may be right, it is well to know what has been said. The Magdawys, or followers of Madoc, have been identified as to name with the Madans; the canoes peculiar to the Mandans among the Indian nations, which were made of the skins of buffaloes stretched over frames of willows and round in shape like a tub, are said to be exactly the Welsh coracle. Many Mandan words are given resembling the Welsh, among the most remarkable being that for the Deity, in Mandan, *Maho peneta*; in Welsh, *Mawr penaethir*.

We are sceptical as to this Welsh-Mandan alliance. We see, then, that a theory, somewhat as follows, meets fairly well the facts of the case. That the original mound builders were the people of another continent, carrying with them the custom of mound building, perhaps from some northern European country: that they extended along the Red River valley and that of the Missouri, as well as up the Ohio: that they used their mounds for burial after the manner of the European nations: that the superficial burials in the mounds are those of a race extending to our own time, who may be descendants of the earlier mound-building race absorbed by an Indian nation, but retaining mental and physical traces of a foreign ancestry: that this race is the tribe of Mandans, who have become almost extinct during the present century from small-pox.

This theory, it will be observed, gives a fair explanation of the oft-repeated claim of a considerable European emigration to America centuries before Columbus; it accounts for the possession of higher features of civilization by savage nations in the very interior of America; it agrees with the various facts revealed by the opened burial-mound, and explains the main points of the legend given by the Saulteaux half-breeds of the Red river. We leave it with out readers. We do not pin our faith to it. To any one who questions it, it is fair to say, advance a theory better explaining the facts, and we shall gladly withdraw the one offered.

NOTE.—In the second paper, written two years later, and after investigation of several other mounds, the writer, it will be seen, inclines to the invasion of the Toltecs from the south as supplying the race of Mound Builders, i. e., the Asiatic rather than the European origin.

II. EXCAVATION OF GREAT MOUND, RAINY RIVER, AUGUST 22, 1884

Ours are the only mounds making up a distinct mound-region on Canadian soil. This comes to us as a part of the large inheritance which we who has migrated to Manitoba receive. No longer cribbed, cabined, and confined, we have in this our "Greater Canada" a far wider range of study than in the fringe along the Canadian lakes. Think of a thousand miles of prairie! The enthusiastic Scotsman was wont to despise our level Ontario, because it had no Grampians, but the mountains of Scotland all piled together would reach but to the foot hills of our Rockies. The Ontario geologist can only study the rocks in garden plots, while the Nor'wester revels in the age of reptiles in his hundreds of miles of Cretaceous rocks, with the largest coal and iron area on the continent. As with our topography so with history. The career of the Hudson's Bay Company, which is in fact the history of Rupert's Land, began 120 years before the history of Ontario, and there were forts of the two rival Fur Companies on the Saskatchewan and throughout the country, before the first U. E. Loyalist felled a forest tree in Upper Canada. We are especially fortunate in being the possessors also of a field for archæological study in the portion of the area occupied by the mound builders—the lost race, whose fate has a strange fascination for all who enquire into the condition of Ancient America.

The Indian guide points out these mounds to the student of history with a feeling of awe; he says he knows nothing of them; his fathers have told him that the builders of the mounds were of a different race from them—that the mounds are memorials of a vanished people—the "Ke-te-anish-i-na-be," or "very ancient men." The oldest Hudson's Bay officer, and the most intelligent of the native people born in the country, can only give some vague story of their connection with a race who perished with small-pox, but who, or whence, or of what degree of civilization they were, no clue is left.

It must be said moreover that a perusal of the works written about the mounds, especially of the very large contributions to the subject found in the Smithsonian Institution publications, leaves the mind of the reader in a state of thorough confusion and uncertainty. Indeed, the facts relating to the Mound Builders are as perplexing a problem as the purpose of the Pyramids, or the story of King Arthur.

Is it any wonder that we hover about the dark mystery, and find in our researches room for absorbing study, even though we cannot reach absolute certainty? Could you have seen the excitement which prevailed among the half-dozen settlers, I had employed in diggin^g the mound on Rainy River, in August last, when the perfect pottery cup figured below was found, and the wild enthusiasm with which they prosecuted their further work, you would have said it requires no previous training, but simply a successful discovery or two to make any one a zealous mound explorer.

A MOUND DESCRIBED.

A mound of the kind found in our region is a very much flattened cone, or round-topped hillock of earth. It is built usually, if not invariably where the soil is soft and easily dug, and it is generally possible to trace in its neighborhood the depression whence the mound material has been taken. The mounds are as a rule found in the midst of a fertile section of country, and it is pretty certain from this that the Mound Builders were agriculturists, and chose their dwelling places with their occupation in view, where the mounds are found. The mounds are found accordingly on the banks of the Rainy River and Red River, and their affluents in the Northwest, in other words upon our best land stretches, but not so far as observed around the Lake of the Woods, or in barren regions. Nearing fishing grounds they greatly abound. What seem to have been strategic points upon the river were selected for their sites. The promontory giving a view and so commanding a considerable stretch of river, the point at the junction of two rivers, or the debouchure of a river into a lake or *vice versa* is a favorite spot. At the Long Sault on Rainy River there are three or four mounds grouped together along a ridge. Here some persons of strong imagination profess to see remains of an ancient fortification, but to my mind this is mere fancy. Mounds in our region vary from 6 to 50 feet in height, and from 60 to 130 feet in diameter. Some are circular at the base, others are elliptical.

MOUND REGIONS.

The mounds have long been known as occurring in Central America, in Mexico, and along the whole extent of the Mississippi valley from the Gulf of Mexico to the great lakes. Our Northwest has, however, been neglected in the accounts of the mound-bearing region. Along our Red River I can count some six or eight mounds that have been noted in late years, and from the banks having been peopled and cultivated I have little doubt that others have been obliterated. One formerly stood on the site of the imposing Fort Garry Court in this city. The larger number of those known are in the neighborhood of the rapids, 16 or 18 miles below Winnipeg, where the fishing is good. In 1879 the Historical Society opened one of these, and obtained a considerable quantity of remains. It is reported that there are mounds also on Nettley Creek, a tributary of the lower Red River, also on Lake Manitoba and some of its affluents. During the past summer it was my good fortune to visit the Rainy River, which lies some half way of the distance from Winnipeg to Lake Superior. In that delightful stretch of country, extending for 90 miles along the river there are no less than 21 mounds. These I identify with the mounds of Red River. The communication between Red and Rainy Rivers is effected by ascending the Red Lake River, and coming by portage to a river running from the south into Rainy River. Both Red and Rainy River easily connect with the head waters of the Mississippi. Our region then may be regarded as a self-contained district including the most northerly settlements of the strange race who built the mounds. I shall try to connect them with other branches of the same stock lying further to the east and south. For convenience I shall speak of the extinct people who inhabited our special region as the *Takawgamis*, or farthest north Mound Builders.

MOUND VARIETIES.

The thirty or forty mounds discovered up to this time in this region of the *Takawgamis* have, so far as examined, a uniform structure. Where stone could be obtained there is found below the surface of the ground a triple layer of flat limestone blocks, placed in an imbricated manner over the remains interred. In one mound, at the point where the Rainy Lake enters the Rainy River, there is a mound situated at Coutche tcheng near Fort Frances, in which there was found on excavation, a structure of logs some 10 feet square, and

from six to eight feet high. In all the others yet opened the structure has been simply of earth of various kinds heaped together. It is possible that the mound containing the log erection may have been for sacrifice, for the logs are found to have been charred. One purpose of all the mounds of the Takawgamis was evidently sepulture; and in them all, charcoal lumps, calcined bones and other evidences of fire are found. It would seem from their position that all the mounds of this region were for the purpose of observation as well as sepulture. The two purposes in no way antagonize. For the better understanding of the whole I have selected the largest mound of the Takawgamis yet discovered, and will describe it more minutely.

THE GRAND MOUND.

It is situated on the Rainy River, about 20 miles from the head of Rainy River. It stands on a point of land where the Missachappa or Big American and the Rainy River join. There is a dense forest covering the river bank where the mound is found. The owner of the land has made a small clearing, which now shows the mound to some extent to one standing on the deck of a steamer passing on the river. The distance back from the water's edge is about 50 yards. The mound strikes you with great surprise as your eye first catches it. Its crest is covered with lofty trees, which overtop the surrounding forest. These thriving trees, elm, soft maple, basswood and poplar, 60 or 70 feet high now thrust their root tendrils deep into the aforesaid softened mound. A foot or more of a mass of decayed leaves and other vegetable matter encases the mound. The brushy surface of the mound has been cleared by the owner, and the thicket formerly upon it removed. The circumference of one fine poplar was found to be 4 feet 10 inches; of another tree, 5 feet 6 inches, but the largest had lately fallen. Around the stump the last measured 7 feet. The mound is elliptical at the base. The longest diameter, that is from east to west, the same direction as the course of the river, is 117 feet. The corresponding shorter diameter from north to south is 90 feet. The circumference of the mound is consequently 325 feet. The highest point of the mound is 45 feet above the surrounding level of the earth. As to height the mound does not compare unfavorably with the celebrated mound at Miamisburg, Ohio, known as one of the class of "observation mounds," which is 68 feet high and 852 feet around the base. In addition to its purpose of sepulture, everything goes to show that the "Grand Mound" of Rainy River was for observation as well.

THE EXCAVATION.

Two former attempts had been made to open this mound. One of these had been made in the top, and the large skull before you was then obtained. A more extensive effort was that made in 1883, by Mr. E. McColl, Indian agent, Mr. Crowe, H. B. officer of Fort Frances, and a party of men. Their plan was to run a tunnel from north to south through the base of the mound. They had penetrated some ten or fifteen feet, found some articles of interest, and had then given up the undertaking. Having employed a number of men, settlers in the neighborhood, I determined to continue the tunnel for a certain distance through the mound, all the way if indications were favorable, and then to pierce the mound from the top. The men in two parties went industriously to work on the opposite sides, working toward each other, making a tunnel about eight feet in diameter. The earth though originally soft soil had become so hard that it was necessary to use a pick axe to loosen it for the spade. A number of skeletons were found on the south side, but all I should say within ten feet from the original surface of the mound. As we penetrated the interior fewer remains were continually found. The earth gave many indications of having been burnt. At one point the pick-axe sank ten inches into the hard wall. This was about fifteen feet from the outside. The excavator then dug out with his hand from a horizontal pocket in the earth eight or ten inches wide and eighteen or twenty inches deep, a quantity of soft brown dust, and a piece of bone some four inches long, a part of a human forearm bone. This pocket was plainly the original resting place of a skeleton, probably in a sitting posture. As deeper penetration was made brown earthy spots without a trace of bone remaining were come upon. The excavation on the south side was continued for thirty feet into the mound, but at this stage it was evident that bones, pottery, etc., had been so long interred that they were reduced to dust. No hope seemed to remain now of finding objects of interest in this direction, and so with about forty feet yet wanting to complete the tunnel, the search was transferred to the top of the mound.

THE UPPER CUT.

Beginning on the crest of the mound, the trees were removed over a considerable space, and though some trouble was found from the presence of the roots of the growing trees, yet three or four feet from the surface human bones and skeletons

began to occur. In some cases a complete skeleton was found, in other cases what seemed to be a circle of skulls, buried alongside charred bones, fragments of pottery and other articles. Several different excavations were made on the mound surface, and it was found that every part from the base to the crest contained bones and skeletons, to the depth of from six to ten feet as already said; bones and articles of interest were found thus far; deeper than this, nothing. I shall now describe the articles found in this mound, and refer in some cases to what has been found in the other mounds of the Takawgamis.

NATURAL PRODUCTS.

1. *Bones.* Of the bones found, the skulls were the most interesting. In some cases it would seem as if they alone of the bones had been carried from a distance, perhaps from a distant part of the Mound Builders' territory, from a battle field or some other spot. In some cases this was proved, by the presence in the eye-sockets and cavities of clay of a different kind from that of the mound, showing a previous interment. The mound was plainly a sacred spot of the family or sept. Before you are pieces of charred bone. Of the bones unburnt some were of large size. There are before us two skulls, one from the grand mound, the other from the Red River mound opened by the Society in 1879. The following are the measurements of the two skulls which I have made carefully; and alongside the average measurements of the Brachycephalic type given by Dr. Daniel Wilson, as well as of the Dolichocephalic:

| | AVERAGE DOLICHO- CEPHALIC. | RAINY RIVER SKULL. | RED RIVER SKULL. | AVERAGE BRACHY- CEPHALIC. |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Longitudinal diameter | 7.24 | 7.3 in. | 6.7 | 6.62 |
| Parietal diameter | 5.47 | 5.8 | 5.5 | 5.45 |
| Vertical " | 5.42 | 6.2 | 5.8 | 5.30 |
| Frontal " | 4.36 | 4.2 | 3.7 | 4.24 |
| Intermastoid Arch | 14.67 | 15.3 | 15.6 | 14.63 |
| Intermastoid line | 4.23 | 5.8 | 4.3 | 4.25 |
| Occipito-frontal Arch..... | 14.62 | 17.0 | 13.8 | 13.85 |
| Horizontal circumference | 20.29 | 22.3 | 19.6 | 19.44 |

From this it will be seen that the Red River mound skulls agree with the Toltecan Brachycephalic type; and the Rainy River skull while not so distinctly Brachycephalic yet is considerably above the average of the Dolichocephalic type.

2. *Wood.* As already stated it is only in some of the mounds that charred wood is found. This specimen is from the mound at Coutchetcheng, at the head of Rainy River. It

stands beside the Rapids. This mound has supplied many interesting remains. From this fact as well as from its situation, I would hazard the opinion that here, as at the great Rainy River Falls, three miles farther down, there were villages in the old mound building days. It is a fact worthy of notice that the site of the first French Fort on Rainy River, St. Pierre built by Verandrye in 1731, was a few hundred yards from this mound.

3. *Bark.* Specimens of birch bark were found near by the bones. It was no doubt originally used for swathing or wrapping the corpses buried. That a soft decayable substance such as bark, should have lasted while a number of bones had decayed may seem strange. No doubt this may be explained in the same way as the presence among the remains in Hochelaga, on the Island of Montreal, of preserved fragments of maize, viz.: by its having been scorched. The pieces of bark seem to have been hardened by scorching.

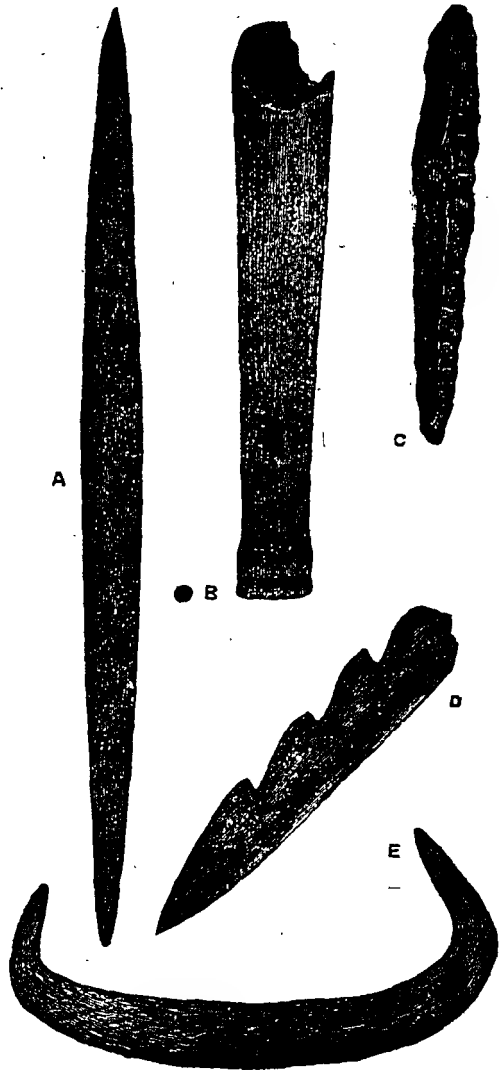
4. *Earth.* The main earth of the mound is plainly the same as that of the soil surrounding it. By what means the earth was piled up, is a question for speculation. It seems a matter of small moment. Possibly that the earth was carried in baskets, or vessels of considerable size, is sufficient to account for it. My theory is that the mound was not erected by a vast company of busy workers as were the pyramids, but that it was begun at first for purposes of observation, that as interments were from time to time made in it sufficient earth was carried up to effect the purpose, until in centuries the enormous aggregate of earth was formed. Among the earth of the mound are also found in spots, quantities of red and yellow ochre. The fact that the skulls and bones seem often to have a reddish tinge, goes to show that the ochre was used for the purpose of ornamentation. Sometimes a skull is drawn out of the firm cast made by it in the earth, and the cast is seen to be reddened by the ochre which was probably smeared over the face of the slain warrior. The ochre is entirely foreign to the earth of which the mound is made, but being earthy remains long after even pottery has gone to decay.

5. *Ore.* Lying near this skull as if they had been placed in the hands of the corpse were two pieces of metallic ore, one of which is before you. A fresh section of it shows it to be Arsenical Iron Pyrites, each piece weighing four or five ounces. No doubt the shining ore and its heavy weight attracted notice, although it is of no commercial value. The probabilities are that this ore was regarded as sacred, and possibly having been

considered valuable was placed beside the corpse as the ancient obolus was laid beside the departed Greek to pay his fare to crusty Charon.

FIGURE 1.

- A. Native Copper Drill.
- B. Soapstone Conjuror's tube.
- C. Flint Skinning Implement.
- D. Horn Fish Spear.
- E. Native Copper Cutting Knife.



MOUND BUILDERS' IMPLEMENTS.

MANUFACTURED ARTICLES.

1. *Stone Implements.* The stone articles found, no doubt form a very small proportion of the implements used by the lost race. I am able to show you three classes of implements.

(a) *Scrapers.* (See Figure 1c.) These were made after the same manner and from the same material as the flint arrow heads, found so commonly all over this continent. They are usually of an oval or elongated diamond shape, of various thicknesses, but thin at the edges. Their purpose seems to have been to assist in skinning the game, the larger for larger game, the smaller for rabbits and the smaller fur bearing animals. Probably these implements were also used for scraping the hides or skins manufactured into useful articles.

(b) *Stone Axes and Malls.* In the mound on Red River was found the beautiful axe of crystalline limestone, which approaches marble. From the absence of stone so far as we know of this kind in this neighborhood, it is safe to conclude that it came from a distant locality. There are also gray stone celts and hammers used for crushing corn, for hammering wood and bark for the canoes, and other such like purposes, in time of peace; and serving as formidable weapons in time of war. In the mound on the Red River a skull was discovered having a deep depression in its broken wall, as if crushed in by one of these implements.

(c) *Stone Tubes.* (See B Fig. 1.) These are among the most difficult of all the Mound Builders' remains to give an opinion upon. They are chiefly made of a soft stone something like the pipestone used by the present Indians which approaches soapstone. The hollow tubes (see figure B.) vary from three to six inches in length, and are about one-half an inch in diameter. They seem to have been bored out by some sharp instrument. Schoolcraft, certainly a competent Indian authority, states that these tubes were employed for astronomical purposes, that is to look at the stars. This is unlikely; for though the race, with which I shall try to identify our Mound Builders are said, in regions further south, to have left remains showing astronomical knowledge, yet a more reasonable purpose is suggested for the tubes. From the teeth marks around the rim, the tubes were plainly used in the mouth, and it is becoming generally agreed that they were conjurer's cupping instruments for sucking out as the medicine men pretended to be able to do the disease from the body. The custom survives in some of the present Indian tribes. A lady friend of mine informs me that she has a bone whistle taken from a mound in the Red River district.

2. *Horn Implements.* (See D. Figure 1.) The only implement of this class that we have yet found is the fish spear head (Figure D). It was probably made from the antlers of a deer killed in the chase. Its barbed edge indicates that it was used for spearing fish. It is in a fair state of preservation.

3. *Copper.* No discovery of the mounds so fills the mind of the Archæologist with joy as that of copper implements. Copper mining has now by the discovery in the Lake Superior region, of mining shafts long deserted, in which copper was quarried by stone hammers on a large scale, been shown to have been pursued in very ancient times on this continent. It is of intense interest for us to know that not only are there mines found on the south side of Lake Superior, but also at Isle Royale, on the north side just at the opening of Thunder Bay, and immediately contiguous to the Grand Portage, where the canoe route to Rainy River, so late as the 19th century, started from Lake Superior. According to the American Geologists the traces for a mile are found of an old copper mine on this Island. One of the pits opened showed that the excavation had been made in the solid rock to the depth of nine feet, the walls being perfectly smooth. A vein of native copper eighteen inches thick was discovered at the bottom. Here is found also, unless I am much mistaken, the mining location whence the Takawgamis of Rainy River obtained their copper implements. Two copper implements are in our possession, one found by Mr. E. McColl in the Grand Mound, and the other by Mr. Alexander Baker in a small mound adjoining this.

(a) *Copper Needle or Drill.* (See A. Figure 1.) This was plainly used for some piercing or boring purpose. It is hard, yields with difficulty to the knife, and is considered by some to have been tempered. It may have been for drilling out soft stone implements, or was probably used for piercing as a needle soft fabrics of bark and the like, which were being sewed together.

(b) *Copper Cutting Knife.* (See E. Figure 1.) This has evidently been fastened into a wooden handle. It may have been used for cutting leather, being in the shape of a saddler's knife, or was perhaps more suited for scraping the hides and skins of animals being prepared for use.

Some twenty miles above the mound on the Rainy River at Fort Frances a copper chisel buried in the earth was found by Mr. Pither, then H. B. Company agent, and was given by him to the late Governor McTavish. The chisel was ten inches long, was well tempered, and was a good cutting instrument.

Another copper implement is in the possession of our Society, which was found buried in the earth 100 miles west of Red River.

All these, I take it, were made from copper obtained from Isle Royale on Lake Superior.

4. *Shell Ornaments.* Traces are found in the mound, of the fact that the decorative taste, no doubt developed in all ages, and in all climes, was possessed by the Takawgamis.

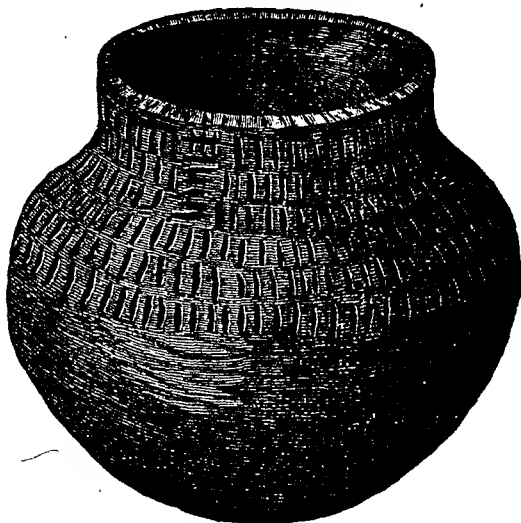
((a) *Sea Shells.* Important as pointing to the home and trading centres of the Mound Builders is the presence among the debris of the mound, of sea shells. We have three specimens found in the Grand Mound. Two of them seem to belong to the genus *Natica*, the other to *Marginella*. They have all been cut or ground down on the side of the opening of the shell, so that two holes permit the passage of a string, by which the beads thus made are strung together. The fact that the genera to which the shells belong are found in the sea, as well as their highly polished surface, show these to be marine; and not only so but from the tropical seas, either we suppose from the Gulf of Mexico or from the Californian coast.

(b) *Fresh Water Shells.* In all the mounds yet opened, examples of the *Unio*, or River Mussel, commonly known as the clam, have been found. They are usually polished, cut into symmetrical shapes, and have holes bored in them. We have one which was no doubt used as a breast ornament, and was hung by a string around the neck. In the bottom of a nearly complete pottery cup, found in the Grand Mound, which went to pieces as we took it out, there was lying a polished clam shell. The clam still abounds on Rainy River. Six miles above the mound, we saw gathered together by an industrious housewife hundreds of the same species of clam, whose shells she was in the habit of pulverizing for the benefit of her poultry.

5. *Pottery.* (a) *Broken.* It seems to be a feature of every mound that has been opened that fragments of pottery have been unearthed. The Society has in its possession remains of twenty or thirty pottery vessels. They are shown to be portions of different pots, by their variety of marking. The pottery is of a coarse sort, seemingly made by hand and not upon a wheel, and then baked. The markings were made upon the soft clay, evidently with a sharp instrument, or sometimes with the finger nail. Some pieces are found hard and well preserved; others are rapidly disintegrating. As stated already, in the Grand Mound a vessel some five inches in diameter was dug up by one of the workers, filled with earth, which though

we tried earnestly to save it, yet went to pieces in our hands. The frequency with which fragments of pottery are found in the mounds has given rise to the theory that being used at the time of the funeral rites the vessel was dashed to pieces as was done by some ancient nations in the burial of the dead. This theory is made very doubtful indeed by the discovery of the

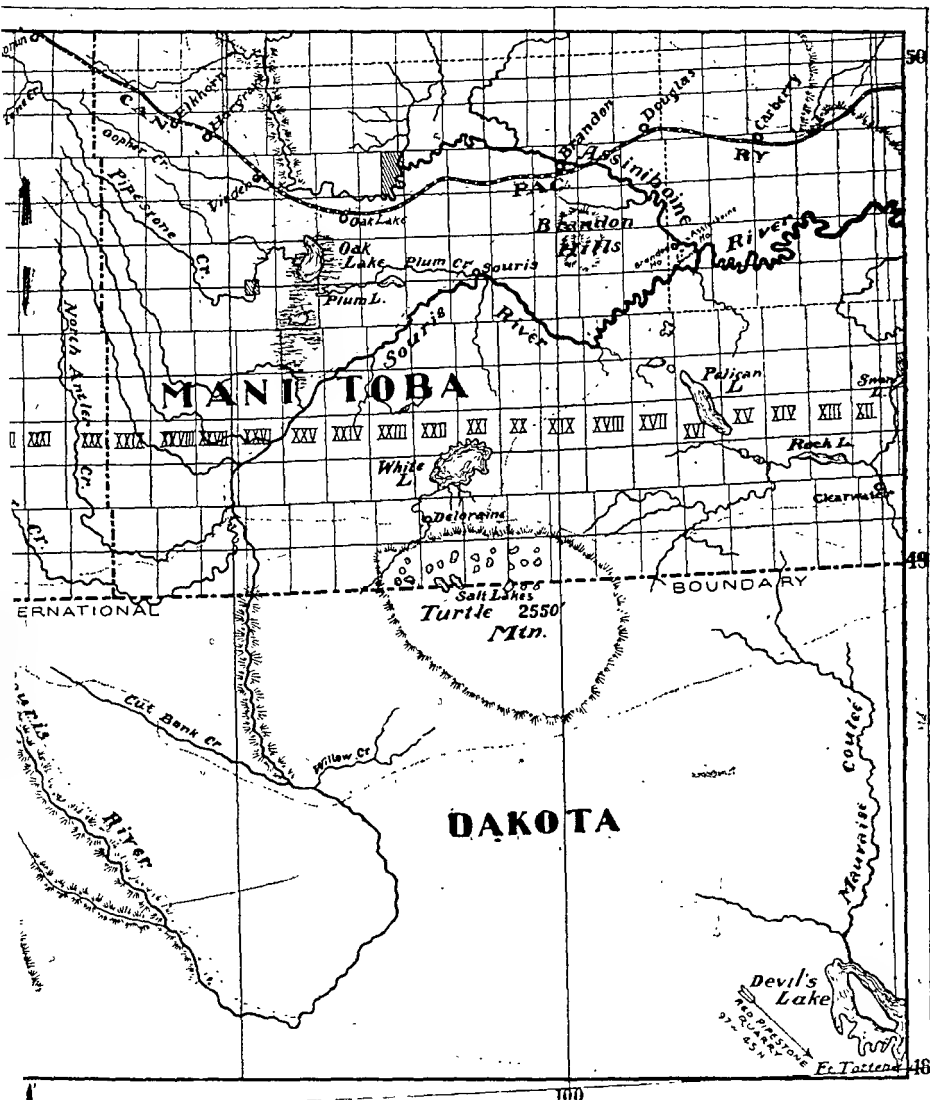
FIGURE 2.



CUP FOUND IN GRAND MOUND AT RAINY RIVER,
August 22nd, 1884.

(b) *Complete Pottery Cup*. So far as I know this is the only complete cup now in existence in the region northwest of Lake Superior, though several others are said to have been discovered and been sent to distant friends of the finders. This cup, belonging now to the Historical Society was found in the Grand Mound, in company with charred bones, skulls, and other human bones, lumps of red ochre, and the shells just described. The dimensions of the cup are as follows: (I regret to say on its being lent to the Industrial Exhibition it was lost.—G. B.)

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Mean diameter at top of rim..... | 2.09 inches. |
| Greatest mean diameter..... | 3.03 " |
| Height | 2.49 " |
| Thickness of material | .092 " |
| Weight | ...oz. " |



Whether the cup was intended for use as a burial urn, or simply for ordinary use it is difficult to say.

Now, in endeavoring to sum up the results, a few points need some discussion.

1. Who were the people who erected the mounds? Judging from the following considerations, I should say they were

NOT AN INDIAN RACE.

Whoever built the mounds had a faculty not possessed by modern Indians. Building instincts seem hereditary. The beaver and the musk rat build a house. Other creatures to whom a dwelling might be serviceable, such as the squirrel obtain shelter in another way. And races have their distinctive tendencies likewise. It never occurs to an Indian to build a mound. From what has been already said as to the fertile localities in which the mounds are found we are justified in believing that their builders were agriculturists. Dr. Dawson in Montreal by the use of the microscope detected grains of charred corn in the remains of Hochelaga. I have examined a small quantity of the dust taken from one of the shells found in the Grand Mound, with the microscope, and though I am not perfectly certain, yet I believe there are traces of some farinaceous substance to be seen. On skirting the shores of the Lake of the Woods into which Rainy River runs, at the present time, you are struck by the fact that there are no Canadian farmers there, and likewise that there are no mounds to be seen, while along the banks of Rainy River both the agriculturist is found cultivating the soil and the mounds abound. It would seem to justify us in concluding that the farmer and the Mound Builder avoided the one locality because of its barren rocky character and took to the other because of its fertility. Moreover the continual occurrence of pottery in the mounds shows that the Mound Builders were potters as well, while none of the tribes inhabiting the district have any knowledge of the art of pottery. The making of pottery is the occupation peculiarly of a sedentary race, and hence of a race likely to be agriculturists. At it requires the building faculty to originate the mounds, so it requires the constructive faculty to make pottery. In constructive ability our Indians are singularly deficient, just as it is with greatest difficulty that they can be induced even on a small scale to practice agriculture. It has been objected to this conclusion that the Indians can make a canoe, which is a marvel in its way. But there is a great difference in the two cases. In the canoe all the materials remain the same. The approximation to a chemical process

makes the pottery manufacture a much more complicated matter. Indeed the Indian in token of his surprise at his success in being even able to construct a canoe, states in his tradition that it is the gift of the Manitou. Furthermore the Mound Builder used metal tools, and was probably a metal worker. It is true the copper implements mentioned, as having been found were brought to Rainy and Red Rivers. I have, however, pointed out the intimate connection judging by the line of transport subsisting between Rainy River and Lake Superior, the mining locality for copper. To sink a mine in the unyielding Huronian rock of Lake Superior, with mallet and hammer and wedge and fire, take out the native copper, work it into the desired tools, and then temper these requires skill and adaptation unpossessed by the Indians. For centuries we know that the Lake Superior mines, in which are found tools and timber constructions, have been buried, filled in for ten feet with debris, and have rank vegetation and trees growing upon them. It is certain that the Indian races, even when shown the example, cannot when left alone follow the mining pursuit. Not only then by the ethnological, and other data cited do we conclude that the Mound Builders belong to a different race from the present Indians, but the tradition of the Indians is to the same effect. Then

WHO WERE THE MOUND BUILDERS?

I would lead you back now to what little we know from the different sources, of the early history of our continent. When the Spaniards came to Mexico in the early years of the 16th century, Montezuma, an Aztec prince, was on the throne. The Aztecs gave themselves out as intruders in Mexico. They were a bloody and warlike race, and though they gave the Spaniards an easy victory, it was rather a reception, for they were overawed by superstition as to the invaders. They stated that a few centuries before, they had been a wild tribe on the high country of the Rio Grande and Colorado, in New Mexico. The access from the Pacific up the Colorado would agree well with the hypothesis that the chief sources of the aboriginal inhabitants of America were Mongolian, and that from parties of Mongols landing from the Pacific Isles on the American coast, the population was derived. At any rate the Aztecs stated that before they invaded Mexico from their original home, they were preceded by a civilized race, well acquainted with the arts and science, knowing more art and astronomy in particular than they. They stated that they had exterminated this race known as

THE TOLTECS.

The main features of the story seem correct. The Toltecs seem to have been allied to the Peruvians. Their skulls seem of the Brachycephalic type. The Toltecs were agriculturists, were mechanical, industrial, and constructive. In Mexico, and further south in Nicaragua, as well as northward, large mounds remain which are traced to them. According to the Aztec story the Toltecans spread in Mexico from the seventh to the twelfth century at which latter day they were swept away. My theory is that it was this race—which must have been very numerous—which either came from Peru in South America, capturing Mexico and then flowing northward; or perhaps came from New Mexico, the American Scythia of that day, and sending one branch down into Mexico, sent another down the Rio Grande, which then spread up the Mississippi and its tributaries. The mounds mark the course of this race migration. They are found on the Mississippi. One part of the race seems to have ascended the Ohio to the great lakes and the St. Lawrence, another went up the Mississippi, while another ascended the Mississippi proper and gained communication from its head waters with the Rainy and Red Rivers. When then did the crest of this wave of migration reach its furthest northward point? Taking the seventh century as the date of the first movement of the Toltecs toward conquest in Mexico, I have set three or four centuries as the probable time taken for multiplication and the displacement of former tribes, until they reached and possessed this northern region of "The Takawgamies," or far north Mound Builders. This would place their occupation of Rainy River in the eleventh century. Other considerations to which I shall refer seem to sustain this as the probable date. The Grand Mound is by far the

LARGEST MOUND

on Rainy River. It is likewise at the mouth of the American River, which is its largest tributary and affords the readiest means of access from the Mississippi up which the Toltecan flood of emigration was surging. My theory is that here in their new homes, for three centuries they multiplied, cultivated the soil, and built the mounds which are still a monument to their industry. Here they became less warlike because more industrious, and hence less able to defend themselves. I have already stated that the

AZTEC WHIRLWIND OF CONQUEST

swept into Mexico from the Northwest about the twelfth century. The sanguinary horde partly destroyed and partly seized for its own use the civilization of the Toltecs. We have specially to do with an Aztec wave that seems to have surged up the valley of the Mississippi. As the great conquering people captured one region, they would settle upon it, and send off a new hive of marauders. Indian tribes, numerous but of the same savage type, are marked by the old Geographers as occupying the Mississippi valley. It was when one part of the northern horde came up the valley of the Ohio, as the Savage Iroquois, and another up the head waters of the Mississippi as the Sioux, the tigers of the plains, that we became familiar in the sixteenth century with this race. The French recognized the Sioux as the same race as the Iroquois and called them "Iroquets" or little Iroquois. The two nations were confederate in their form of government; they had all the fury of the Aztecs, and resemblances of a sufficiently marked kind are found between Sioux or Dakota and the Iroquois dialect, while their skulls follow the Dolichocephalic type of cranium. With fire and sword the invaders swept away the Toltecs; their mines were deserted and filled up with debris; their arts of agriculture, metal working and pottery making were lost; and up to the extreme limits of our country of the Takawgamis, only the mounds and their contents were left.

OUR HISTORIC ERA

saw the expiring blaze of this tremendous conflagration just as the French arrived in Canada. Cartier saw a race in 1535 in Hochelaga who are believed to have had Brachycephalic crania, who were agriculturists, used at least implements of metal, dwelt in large houses, made pottery and were constructive in tendency. In 1608 when Champlain visited the same spot, there were none of the Hochelagans remaining. This remnant of the Toltecs had been swept out of existence between the Algonquin wave from the east and the Iroquois from the southwest. The French heard of a similar race called the Eries and of another the Neutrals, who had the same habits and customs as the vanished Hochelagans, but who had been visited by the scourge of the Iroquois on the Ohio as they ascended it, and had perished. Thus from the twelfth century, the time set for the irruption of the savage tribes from New Mexico, two or three centuries would probably suffice to sweep away the last even of the farthest north Takawgamis. This.

say the sixteenth century, would agree very well, not only with time estimated by the early French explorers, but also with the tradition of the Crees who claim that for three or four centuries they have lived sole possessors upon the borders of Lake Superior, Lake of the Woods, and Lake Winnipeg. Our theory then is that the Mound Builders occupied the region of Rainy and Red Rivers from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries. Their works remain.

HOW OLD

then are the mounds? If our conclusions are correct the oldest mound in our region cannot exceed 800 years, and the most recent must have been completed upwards of 400 years ago. Look at further considerations, which lead to these conclusions. We learn, that 200 years ago, viz.: in 1683, the "Clistinos" and "Assinipouals" (Crees and Assiniboines), were in their present country. The Crees were at that time in the habit of visiting both Lake Superior and Hudson Bay for the purpose of trade. They were then extensive nations and no trace of a nation which preceded them was got from them. The fallen tree on the top of the Grand Mound, judging by the concentric rings of its trunk, is 150 or 200 years old, and yet its stump stands in a foot or more of mould that must have taken longer than that time to form. Even among savage nations it would take upwards of half a dozen generations of men, to lose the memory of so great a catastrophe as the destruction of a former populous race. Then some 400 years ago would agree with the time of extermination of the Hochelagans, or with the destructions of the Eries, who, according to Labontan, were blotted out before the French came to the continent. The Hochelagans, Eries, and Takawgamis being northern in their habitat. I take it, were among the last of the Toltecans who survived. The white man but arrived upon the scene to succeed the farmer, the metal worker and the potter, who had passed away so disastrously, and to be the avenger of the lost race, in driving before him the savage red man.

THE EARLIEST MOUND.

I believe our Grand Mound to be the earliest in the region of the Takawgamis. It is the largest in the region. It will be seen by reference to figure 3 that I arrive at its age in the following way. Where it now stands, so striking an object, it is about one-third of a mile above the point where the American River enters the Rainy River. If, however, from the top of

the mound you look southward through the trees a view may be got of the silver stream of the American, coming as if directly toward the mound. Originally no doubt this tributary flowed close by the mound, for the mound would undoubtedly be built on the extreme point. But as from year to year the American River deposited the detritus carried down by it, it formed a bank or bar, and was gradually diverted from its course, until now, the peninsula some hundreds of yards across

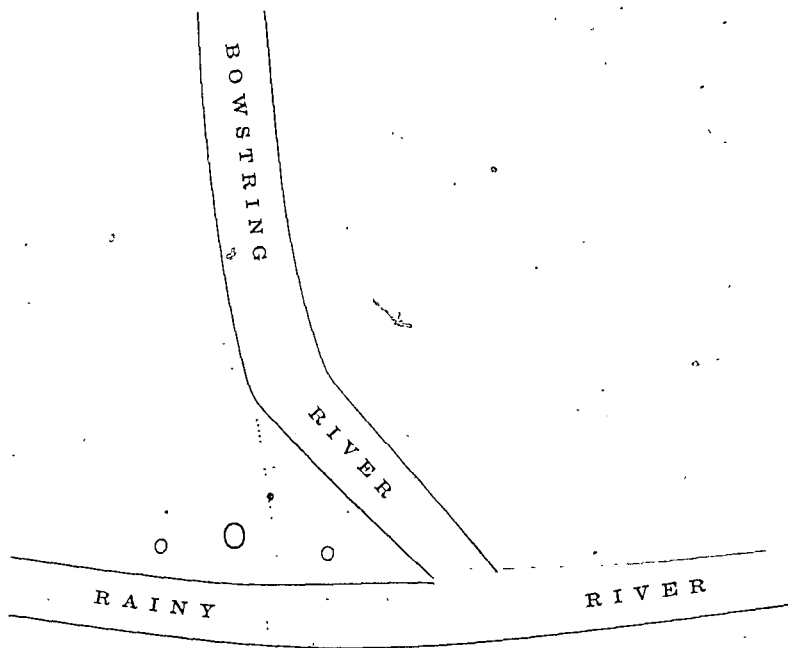


FIGURE 3.

its base, has become upwards of a third of a mile long. I infer that this peninsula which I should say contains some seventy acres has been formed since the mound—which from its position seems for observation as well as for sepulture—was begun. Some 200 yards down the point from the Grand Mound occurs another mound. This is some eight or ten feet high, and fifty or sixty feet across. Along the point and close past this small mound runs an old water course, now a tree-

less hay meadow. At high water in spring, as I ascertained, the river still sends its surplus water by this old channel. My position is that the 200 yards of earth between the site of the Grand Mound and that of the small mound was deposited after the Grand Mound was begun, and before the commencement of the small mound. Undoubtedly this small mound, as well as a similar one not far up the river from the Grand Mound, were begun on account of the laborious work of carrying bones and earth to such a height, and on account of the numerous interments which have left the surface of the Grand Mound a bone pile. This is shown by the small mound being on a site more recent than that of the large mound. Suppose a hundred years to have sufficed to raise the small mound to its height when the devastating ruin of the Sioux slaughtered the last Mound Builder and checked the mound. From our previous position this would represent a point some 500 years ago. But during this 500 years according to our hypothesis all of the point of land below the small mound, that is to say, about 300 yards in length, has been formed. The question then is, how long at the same rate must it have taken the 200 yards between the two mounds to form? This brings us then to a point say 300 years before the time of beginning of the small mound. We thus arrive at about 800 years ago as the time when the Grand Mound was begun. It will thus be seen that we have reached back to the eleventh century, the time previously deduced from historic date for the arrival of the Toltecs on the Rainy River.

CONCLUSION.

Our investigation has now come to an end. I have led you to examine the few fragments of a civilization which it would be absurd to declare to have been of the very highest type, but yet of a character much above that of the wandering tribes, which, with their well-known thirst for blood, destroyed the very arts and useful habits which might have bettered their condition. The whirlwind of barbarian fury is ever one which fills peaceful nations with terror. We may remember how near in the "Agony of Canada," the French power was to being swept out of existence by the fierce fury of the Iroquois — up to that time always victorious. We may remember how civilization in Minnesota was thrown back by the Sioux massacre of 1861. It is only now by persistent and unwearied efforts that we can hope to conquer the Indians by the arts of peace, and by inducing him to take the hoe in place of the tomahawk, to meet nature's obstacles. Who can fail to heave

a sigh for our northrn Mound Builders, and to lament the destruction of so vast and civilized a race as the peaceful Toltecans of Mexico, of the Mississippi, and of the Ohio, to which our Takawgamis belonged? After all, their life must in the main ever remain a mystery.

THE LOST RACE.

"One of our visits to the mound was at night."

Oh, silent mound! thy secret tell!
God's acre grazing toward the sky,
'Midst sombre shade 'neath angel's eye
Thou sleepest till the domesday knell.

Sweet leaflets, on the towering elms,
Oh whisper from your crested height!
Or have lost forests borne from sight
The secret to their buried realms?

Stay, babbling river, hurrying past,
Cans't thou, who saw'st the toilers build,
Not picture on thy bosom stilled,
Life-speaking shadows long since cast?

Or, echo, mocking us with sound,
Repeat the busy voice, we pray,
Of moiling thousands, now dull clay,
And waken up the gloom profound.

Pale, shimmering ghosts that flit around,
While spade and mattock death-fields glean,
Open with words from the unseen
The mysteries now in cerements bound.

No answer yet! We gaze in vain.
With lamp and lore let science come.
Now, clear eyed maiden!—You, too, dumb!
Your light gone out!—'tis night again.

And is this all? an earthen pot!
A broken spear! a copper pin!
Earth's grandest prizes counted in,
A burial mound!—the common lot!

Yes! this were all but o'er the mound,
The stars, that fill the midnight sky,
Are eyes from Heaven that watch on high
Till domesday's thrilling life-note sound.

III. SOURIS COUNTRY: ITS MONUMENTS, MOUNDS, FORTS AND RIVERS

The following is the inaugural lecture of the winter series before the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, recently delivered by the president, Rev. Dr. Bryce:—

On September 7th, 1886, the writer having pursued his journey by rail southwestward through Manitoba, and driven some forty miles by wagon, arrived by the "Boundary Commission trail," at the crossing of the river Souris, about two hundred and twenty-five miles from the city of Winnipeg. Here seen from the brink of a valley about a mile wide, and at the bottom—one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet below the prairie level—runs the river, skirted at places with its belt of timber. The writer's party descended the steep bank, and as the equipage stood in the middle of the stream—at this season very small and shallow—a troop of mingled thought hurried through their minds. Here or very near by passed up, one hundred and forty-four years ago, two brave sons of the intrepid Verandrye, calling the Souris river the St. Pierre, in memory alike of Governor Beauharnois, of Quebec, and of their father, the explorer. By this route they reached, after a short portage, the Missouri, and first of white men north of Mexico, saw on January 1st, 1743, rise before their wondering gaze the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains. This river was the pathway of their great discovery. A few miles back upon the trail must have crossed in the year 1797 a party led by Mr. David Thompson, the astronomer and surveyor of the Northwest Fur Company, from the fort at the mouth of the Souris to the Mandan village on the Missouri, and by the same route journeyed also a party carrying a message in six days over the snowbound prairies in December, 1804, from trader Chabouillez, at the mouth of the Souris to the celebrated American expedition of Lewis and Clark as they ascended the Missouri to cross the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. And centuries before, as evidenced by the remains to be described, here dwelt a numerous population, which fought, and worked, and died, and whose scanty memorials we now have in our possession.

THE COURSE OF THE SOURIS.

The Souris, or Mouse, or St. Pierre river, has a course of some four hundred miles, and may be claimed as a Canadian river, for though crossing the boundary line four times, and having a large portion of its winding career in the Territory of Dakota, in the United States, yet its source is in Wood Mountain on Canadian soil, and its direction, of eighty or more miles after, for the last time, crossing the boundary line is northward to the point where it empties into the Assiniboine. Along this winding course are natural monuments, artificial fortifications, and mounds, and the ruins of fur traders' forts of very great interest, and they constitute for the work of our society, which I venture to think has been of service, in its eight years' existence, in making known many features of our Northwest, a field with virgin soil. Far up in the course of the Souris at a point about 254 miles west of Red River, and some three and a half miles north of the International boundary, is a most interesting group of rocks standing out on the prairie, long known from the most remarkable of them to the half-breed hunters of the plans as

LA ROCHE PERCÉE.

Here at the junction of a small tributary—"Short Creek"—with the Souris river may be seen the fantastic shapes of worn and weather-eaten gray sandstones, having the appearance of ruined shrines. The best known—of which we have a photograph taken by the boundary Commission—resembles the archway of a Pharaonic temple. These vast rocks standing out—a natural Stonehenge—on the open prairie have greatly impressed the Indians, who regard the locality as sacred to the Manitou. Upon the rocks are engraven the totems of many of the redmen who have gone as devotees to this prairie shrine. Human figures, the horse, the elk, the buffalo, the sturgeon, the teepee, the pelican, and the star are all to be found as commemorative emblems. So great was the fame of this prairie wonder among all Indian tribes that Capt. Palliser's expedition in August, 1857, struck southward from Fort Ellice some seventy or eighty miles across the prairie for the sole purpose of observing the grotesque forms of the "pierced rock." At this part of the Souris on its banks are found the well-known

COAL BEDS

for which for years in the early settlement of the province the Souris was chiefly known. It is a remarkable thing in any land

to find exposed on river bank seams of coal eighteen feet in thickness. These were first described by Dr. George Dawson though others had visited them. A reminiscence comes to us in connection with the Souris coal beds. In 1874 or thereabout, when the Boundary Commission had led to the coal being well-known, a company of Winnipeg gentlemen agreed to enter on possession of the lands on the Souris. The writer well remembers the offer being made of a share in the enterprise, and the land was taken up by a number of gentlemen. It was however on account of the difficulty of development, ultimately abandoned. It was a few years later that the first president of the Hudson's Bay Railway with a body of men, actually mined a quantity of coal from these beds and floated down the Souris in the spring in a barge, but found it of far inferior quality to what we now obtain from the Galt and Saskatchewan mines. Coming down the valley of the Souris to a point some or four miles from the Souris river and about three north of the boundary is seen the

HILL OF THE MURDERED SCOUT.

The prairie here is very level. At this point in what seems an old river bed similar to what is known further to the east as the "Blind Souris" begins the "Riviere des Lacs," forming a long and very singular lake. The legend of the "Hill of the murdered Scout," is that in the year 1830 the Assiniboines or Stoney Indians were at war with the Sioux. An Assiniboine brave cautiously climbed the hill or butte to espy the Sioux encampment on the other side when he came upon a Sioux warrior lying asleep in his buffalo robe on the summit of the butte. To seize a granite boulder and kill the sleeping enemy was the work of an instant, and in memory of his triumph the victor dug in the gravelly soil the figure of a man stretched at full length upon the ground, and also hollowed out the marks of his own footprints. Lying in the hollow representing the vanquished enemy's head so late as 1873 was still to be seen a red granite stone some eight inches long, with which this much vaunted deed of Indian daring had been accomplished. No sacrilegious hand would remove that stone from its place as a memorial. The Souris river takes its rise and receives a number of its tributaries from the south from a most remarkable chain of elevations on the western prairies known as the

MISSOURI COTEAU.

This continued singular physical feature of the western prairie runs from northwest to southeast, and is from two to three hun-

dred feet high. At the boundary line it is forty-five miles wide, though it seems to mark the escarpment of a western tableland. Wood Mountain, which rises to 3,800 feet above the sea level, is about twenty miles north of the boundary line, and is but a higher elevation of the Missouri coteau. There is in general no rock on this remarkable elevation. It is a mass of drift perhaps marking the margin of some ancient inland sea or lake. The coteau is covered with pointed hillocks, and toward its western side runs into what the French half-breeds call the "Mauvaises terres," or arid lands, which, with their rough and endless succession of dry and treeless hills, ridges, and desert features, an American writer has described as "a tumultuous expanse of baked mud." Yet from this irregular mass of confused terrain streams as tributaries run northward into the Souris, and south into the Missouri. For many miles parallel to this great coteau, the Souris river pursues its course through Dakota. It is on the summit of this coteau, to the south of a point where the Souris leaves it, that another monument still more famous in the history of the west and of the Indian nations, is found, the

RED PIPESTONE QUARRY.

This is the very centre of Indian poetry and romance. Here is found seemingly the only deposit known of red pipestone, of which almost every American tribe has examples, and of which I present you this evening two specimens from the mounds on the Souris. The writer has found a gray pipestone—a species of steatite on an island in the Lake of the Woods—from which the Indians of that region make pipes, but it is around the red pipestone that Indian tradition gathers. The first white man to visit the red pipestone quarry on the Missouri Coteau, or "Coteau des prairies," was the Indian traveller Catlin in 1836. The specimens brought by him were analyzed, and the new mineral "not steatite, harder than gypsum, and softer than carbon of lime," a red argillite, similar to that seen forming near Nipigon on the C.P.R. line is called in science Catlinite in honor of the traveller. On the top of the Coteau at the quarry there is a perpendicular wall of quartz beds—light grey or in some cases of flesh color—twenty-five feet in elevation and running for nearly two miles from north to south, the surface both of the perpendicular side, and for acres on the top being highly polished and glazed as if by ignition. At the base of this wall for half a mile in width is a level prairie. Near the wall and on the flat lower surface are five enormous boulders of gneiss rock

leaning together and covered over with grey moss, the smallest twelve or fifteen feet in diameter. Under these two holes or ovens are seen. One rock, a portion of the wall, is split off to a distance of some eight feet and is called the "leaping rock." Being perfectly polished it is a feat of great daring on the part of the young braves to have gained a footing on it, and many lives have been lost in the attempt. The face of the wall is covered by totems and emblems hundreds in number, of those who have visited the sacred spot. It is by digging four or five feet through the soil and loose slaty layers of the prairie surface that the celebrated red pipestone is reached. Here then for ages have been all the elements to make a most holy shrine for the superstitious redmen. For centuries this spot was neutral ground. Here all the Indians met, and before entering in the quarry buried their weapons of war. Amid the terrible cruelties of Indian warfare here was at least one place of sanctuary. The legend of the Sioux, who live nearest the spot is: Many ages ago the Great Spirit invited the tribes to meet him at the "Red Pipe." He stood on the top of the rocks, and the people were assembled before him; he took out of the rocks a piece of the red stone, and made a large pipe; he smoked it over them all; told them it was part of their flesh; that though they were at war they must meet at this place as friends; that the stone belonged to them all; that they must make calumets from it and smoke them to him; the Spirit then disappeared in the clouds at the last whiff of his pipe a blaze of fire rolled over the rocks and melted their surface; and two Indian women were carried under the "medicine rocks" where they still remain and must be propitiated by those who wish to take any of the pipestone away." Longfellow in the opening canto of *Hiawatha* has closely followed Catlin's account of the traditions:

"Down the rivers, o'er the prairies,
 Came the warriors of the nations,
 Came the Delawares and Mohawks.
 Came the Choctaws and Comanches,
 Came the Shoshonies and Blackfeet,
 Came the Pawnees and Omawhaws,"
 "Came the Mandans and Dacotahs,
 Came the Hurons and Ojibways.
 All the warriors drawn together
 By the signal of the Peace-pipe,
 To the mountains of the prairie.
 To the great Red-Pipestone Quarry."

Following now the *Souris* in its last crossing over the International boundary the point is reached where, coming from the east, the exploring party in September last arrived, ten miles north of the line. Here is met

THE REGION OF THE ANTLERS

in township 2, range 27 west. Two streams, North and South Antler creeks, running from the west, winding through deep valleys, empty a little more than two miles apart into the Souris river. The Sioux name for these is He-ka-pa-wa-kpa, or translated, the "Head and Horns Creek," and certainly the two streams widening apart as they are ascended, have something of the appearance of the antlers of a deer. Here is one of the most beautiful spots in Manitoba. The space between the streams is now closely settled by a thrifty and most intelligent class of Canadian farmers. The settler, the school, and the missionary have here replaced the buffalo of but a few years ago, and the new settlers have, as we shall see, undoubtedly succeeded a considerable population, which many a year ago faded away. Guarded on three sides by the deep valleys of the Souris and its two tributaries, there can be little doubt that here was a prairie stronghold in the days of aboriginal wars. This leads us to notice first a group of

REMARKABLE EARTHWORKS

(See Map, Page 41.)

which would seem to have served as fortifications on the south side of the South Antler. There have been found on the tributaries of the Missouri lines of earthworks thrown up, earthen redoubts, and mounds in connection with them evidently as lookout stations. Lewis and Clark in their "travels to the source of the Missouri," in 1804, give us a carefully traced diagram of such works on the Missouri, and they state that the French interpreters assured them that there are great numbers of these fortresses even as far north as the Jacques river, whose head waters reach well upwards the Souris. In section 15 on the South Antler are four earthworks running from north to south respectively 125, 100, 150 and 75 yards in length and arranged in a sort of echelon. These are each from five to ten yards wide, some three or four feet high and have much the appearance of a railway grade on the prairie. A large amount of labor must have been required to throw them up. On the next section however—section 10—is by far the most remarkable fortification, and very much resembling that figured by Lewis and Clark. Across a bend of the river is a large and wide embankment 200 yards long, running from north to south. At each end of this is a considerable mound. From the southern extremity of this at a distance of ten yards runs another bank of about the same dimensions but 150 yards long, at right angles to the former, and flanked like the other at both ends by

mounds. The earthworks are all on the open prairie and arrest the attention of the most unobservant. It will be noticed that these fortifications are, so far as observed on the south side of the South Antler, just in the direction from which an enemy would have come and by the route of attack he would most likely have chosen. The mounds found, whatever other purpose they may have served, were plainly for observation. It has been suggested that these earthworks may have been used for impounding the buffalo, when at times the herd was driven in by riders, and thus, many slaughtered, but the arrangement of the embankments does not suggest this object.

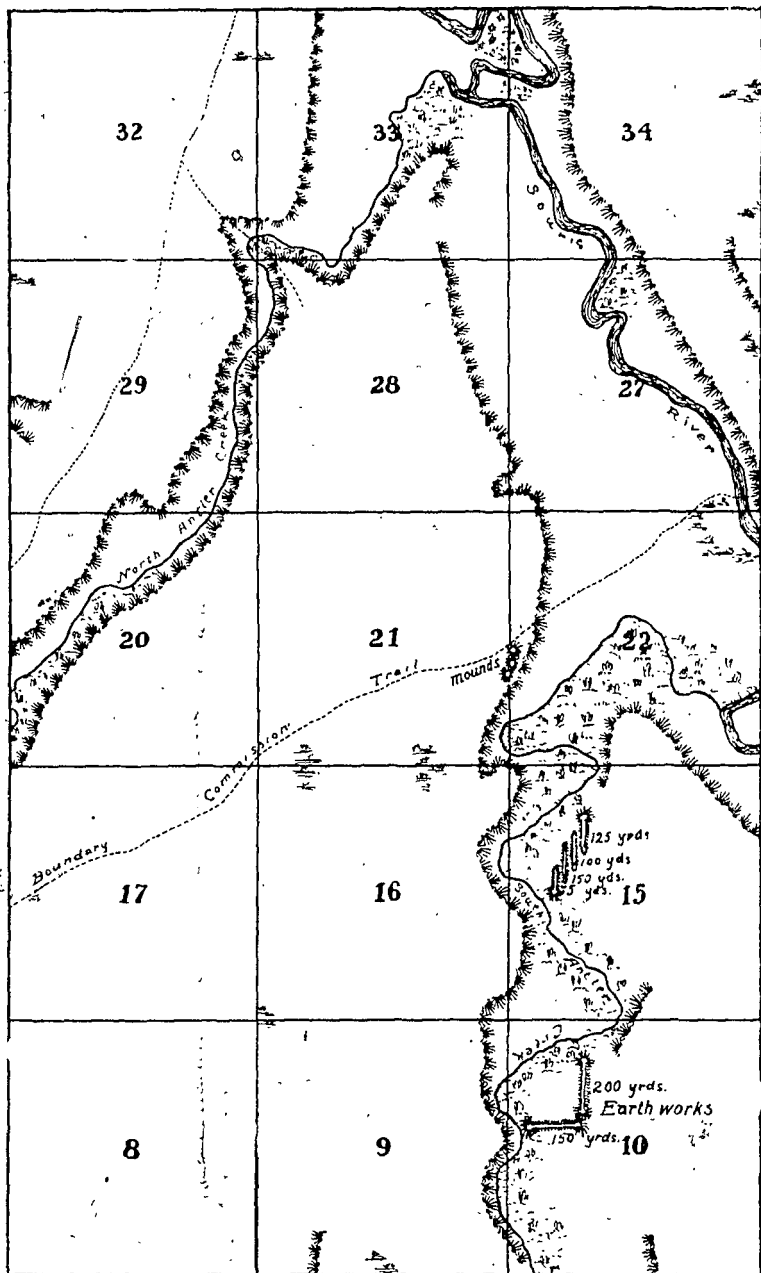
This district about the Antlers has however long been celebrated as a

• GREAT MOUND REGION.

It is interesting to know that Prof. Hind in 1858, on a point between a stream and the Souris river, near the 49th parallel "found a number of conical mounds and the remains of an intrenchment." An excavation was made in one of the mounds, but the explorer found nothing. The mounds and embankments which have been now described, are those examined by Hind. He even calls what we now know as the South Antler, by the name "Mandan Creek," believing the mounds to have been former Mandan dwellings. This, indeed, was the half-breed tradition on Red river as well as in other parts of the Northwest. The late expedition, however, within an area of four miles square in the townships named, surveyed no less than twenty-one mounds, and from accounts of other explorers the mounds continue westward as the ascent of the Antlers is made. The mounds vary from twenty feet in diameter to fifty or sixty and are at the highest point from four to seven feet high, being almost all flattened cones. They are very much less in size than the mounds opened two years ago on Rainy River, which lie three or four hundred miles to east of these. The party opened four mounds, and thanks are especially due for assistance rendered, to Messrs. Gould, Elliott and Sheriff, of Sourisford, while Dr. Thornton and Mr. Shepard, of Deloraine, and Mr. Cooper, of Brandon, entered with much enthusiasm into the explorations. The settlers had previously opened two mounds about May, and had been rewarded by finding several very interesting articles.

• THE EXCAVATIONS.

The theory of the writer that the mounds, so far as discovered in the Northwest, have all been for observation, as well



MAP OF TOWNSHIP 2, RANGE 27 WEST, MANITOBA.
THE ANTLERS.

as in some cases for other purposes, was borne out by the score examined. They are situated on headlands or points commanding a view of the valley. This was further supported by the fact that the two mounds first opened yielded no reward of bone, implement, or trinket. They were simply heaps of earth, in one case gravelly, gathered up from the surrounding area, and if they had ever been used for sepulture every trace of such had disappeared. Now, as articles of stone or metal were usually buried with the dead the conclusion seems pretty certain that these mounds were "observation mounds," and nothing more.

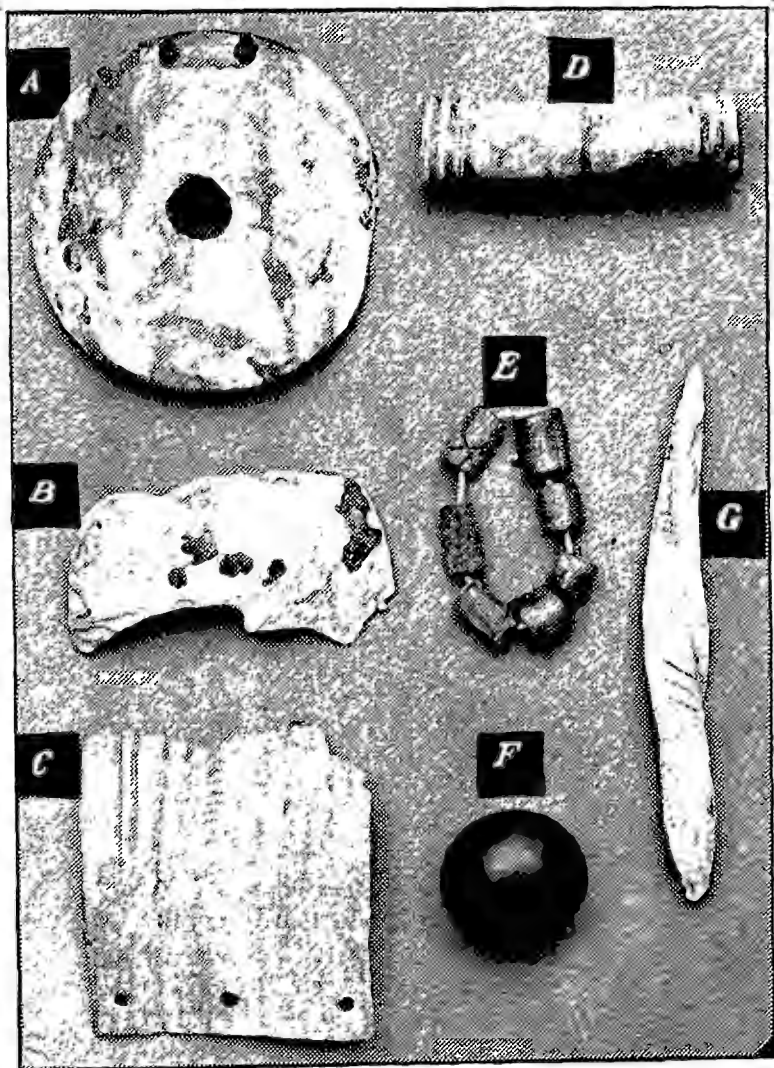
A RICH MOUND.

After meeting with the settlers at a most enjoyable picnic, the party hastened away to a headland on the north side of the North Antler, where a promising looking mound remained untouched. After three or four hours' hard work the "find" was gathered up and proved to be most interesting. Almost all the articles found were in company with a skeleton which was nearly entire. The skull presented no distinctive features, being rather of the dolicho-cephalic type. On account of the considerable remains already in the possession of the society, the skeleton was not brought away, but committed to its resting place again. As the skull was raised up there fell from the forehead three flattened pieces of copper, each about 2 1-2 inches long by 1 inch in width, which seem to have been a frontlet fastened on the brow. A similar set of copper pieces was found on another skull in another mound opened by the settlers. The copper, as we see by subjecting it to the microscope, is native copper simply beaten out, and judging from the streaks of silver visible is certainly shown to be from Lake Superior. The list of articles obtained from the Souris mounds and now presented to you is given herewith, as time forbids a minute description of the several articles:

Metal—Three pieces copper frontlets.

Pottery—Two pottery cups; one virtually complete, the other with a small portion broken.

Organic remains—Hollow bone of bird, nine inches long, cut for whistle, and discolored green by copper. Two polished bones, probably crackers. Two flat bone implements with holes, seemingly for some tanning process. String of bone beads, nine in number, two marked. Bone conjurer's tube, with markings. Small bone implement with markings—purpose unknown. Fragment of baculite, and specimen of *Inoceramus*, now much



MOUND BUILDERS' ORNAMENTS, ETC.

- A. Ornamental gorget of turtle's plastron.
- B. Gorget of sea-shell (1879).
- C. Gorget of buffalo bone.
- D. Breast or arm ornament of very hard bone.

- E. String of beads of birds' leg bones. Note cross X.
- F. One of three polished stones used for gaming.
- G. Columella of large sea conch (tropical), used as sinker for fishing.

weathered, but no doubt buried as of value for their brilliant nacreous covering. Several wampum beads. Breast ornament with perforations, evidently portion of large sea shell. Pieces of birch bark basket well preserved with regular piercing of sewing. Numerous pieces of charcoal, with evidence in mound of burning having taken place.

Stone—Two pipes from the Red pipestone quarry. Three round stones seemingly used for game. Two stone hammers.

DATE OF THE MOUNDS.

The Manitoba Historical Society has now obtained the result of mound opening investigations within its territory from three distinct regions:

1. Red River; 2, Rainy River; 3, Souris, hundreds of miles apart. Some twenty mounds have been pretty fully opened. The following results seem more or less firmly established:

1. That the mounds are found in fertile regions, and from which it would seem their builders were agriculturists. 2. The present races of Indians, included in this area the Ojibways, Crees, and Sioux, maintain that they were not built by their ancestors. 3. A persistent tradition of smallpox is connected with the mounds both on the Red and Rainy rivers, and there is a fear on the part of the Indians to have them opened. 4. On the Red and Souris rivers a tradition that they were built by the Mandans, or as they are incorrectly called the "Mandrills," prevails. 5. No articles of European manufacture have been found in any of these Northwestern mounds. 6. Sea shells have been found in the mounds of the three regions; stone and bone implements in them all; pottery in most of them. Copper has been found in the Rainy River and Souris mounds, but not in those of Red River, 7. Evidences of fire, as of charcoal, burnt bones, etc., have been found in all.

PROBABLE THEORY.

The theory advanced by the writer in 1882 in his work on "Manitoba" is receiving in its main features confirmation from later discoveries. The probabilities are in favor of the mound builders of this region having been other than ancestors of our Indians. The connection seems almost certain with the Mandans, or "White bearded Sioux," of the Missouri river, who have nearly disappeared, but who when visited by Catlin fifty years ago were an agricultural, pottery-making, earth-dwelling tribe, among whom were many before the advent of

the white man "whose skins were almost white," whom their earliest visitors declare were "a strange people, and half white," with many "from infancy to manhood and old age, with hair of a bright silvery grey." These Mandans, or as our half-breeds call them, "Mandrills," regarded themselves as not an ancient people in their location on the Missouri. Since Catlin visited them they have nearly all been carried away by small-pox. It does not seem unlikely that they have been the disappearing remnant of a race which faded away as did the Hoche-lagans in Montreal before the time of Champlain. It is worthy of remark, at any rate, that in our Northwest mounds we have found among the copper, shell, bone and stone implements and ornaments nothing of European manufacture, which would almost certainly have been the case had the burials taken place within the last two hundred years, since which time the Indians from this region have been in the habit of going down to meet the traders at Hudson Bay. And yet it would seem from their not building mounds, but having some of the other characters of the mound builders, that the Mandans are but connected with that race which must be looked upon as extinct. The writer was informed by Sir William Dawson that an Indian race further south have a tradition that they inter-married with the extinct mound builders, and that their language, which is composite, is now being examined to eliminate the mound builders' element and thus we may perhaps hope for something as to this strange race from a philological direction.

THE SOURIS FORTS.

The country along the Souris was well known in early fur-trading years for its large herds of buffalo. It is believed there was a French Fort at the mouth of the Souris, on its entrance into the Assiniboine, for though there is not yet known an historic record of it, it is declared that in the time of Verandrye this river was "the centre of the establishments." We learn that before 1754 there was a French priest at this point, that he had lived there several years as a missionary, and that he had taught the Indians some short prayers in the French language, the whole of which they had not forgotten as vouched for by a fur-trader in 1804. At the beginning of the century the importance as a trading point of the mouth of the Souris river may be seen by the fact that there were here three forts, representing three rival trading movements; the most considerable being Brandon House, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, Assiniboine House,* of the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal, and Fort a la

*See large Map, Page 24.

Souris, the post of X Y, or New Northwest Company, which broke off from the Northwest Company in 1796, but re-united was it in 1804.

BRANDON HOUSE.

This, in its day, important post was founded by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1794. In the year 1883 the writer visited the site of it, overlooking the Assiniboine, traced its outline distinctly on the grassy bank, and measured the size of the former enclosure and of the buildings which it had contained. It is on the property of a settler, Mr. George Moir, formerly of Beauharnois, Quebec (S. W. 19, T. 8, R. 16 W.), is about three miles from the mouth of the Souris, and about thirteen miles down the Assiniboine from the city of Brandon. The outline of the stockade was followed, and found to be 155 feet on the north, and 124 feet on the east side, which faced the river. The gate space—10 feet wide—had beside it the outline of a watch tower, and the inner space showed remains of six houses, the largest being 64 feet by 16 feet. The position was an excellent one, being on a sort of river point, and flanked toward the east by a considerable ravine. Brandon House was the point from which to Hudson Bay and return could be made by the York boats in one season, and was thence a considerable depot. It was during the year 1816 under the charge of a Hudson's Bay Company officer, Peter Fidler, who had been in charge of Cumberland House in 1806, was useful in bringing in the Selkirk colony, who made the first survey of Red river lots, and whose library formed the basis of the old Red river library, the predecessor of our provincial library. Brandon House was seized by the Nor'-westers in 1816, and would seem shortly after to have been abandoned, for it is not mentioned as a fort in the union of the rival fur companies in 1821.

ASSINIBOINE HOUSE.

The oldest of the three forts would seem to have been Assiniboine House, or as it was often called "Stone Indian River House." About two miles to the west of the mouth of the Souris, on the north side of the Assiniboine, may still be seen a gap in the woods, where are the ruins of this fort. It was so early as 1797, a central trading depot from which traders received stores, and went even as far south as the Missouri. The astronomer, Thompson, started from this fort on his journey to the Mandans in the year named. Assiniboine House was at this time under a Nor'-wester trader, named John McDonell. In 1804 the trader Harmon, visited Assiniboine

House. He had, on his way from the west, stopped at a Nor'wester Fort, which he called Montagne a la Basse—about 50 miles west of Souris mouth. This, which would in English mean "Sand Bank Hill," seems to have been northwest of Oak Lake, and it is probably in a corrupted form the "Boss Hill" of Capt. Palliser. Assiniboine House was in charge, at the time, of Mr. Charles Chaboilliez, and the trader states that the people from the other two forts were in May of that year invited to a very boisterous entertainment in Assiniboine House. In this year the Nor'west and X. Y. Companies united, and Assiniboine House would seem to have been combined with it, and the headquarters of the united company at this point to have become

FORT A LA SOURIS.

Across the ravine from Brandon House, and on the adjoining quarter section, are yet to be seen the ruins of what we take to have been Fort a la Souris. The site is grown over with great weeds and underbrush, but the stockade would seem to have been about 150 feet by 66 feet. Four cellars and a chimney are still traceable on the site. This fort was the rival of Brandon House in the troubles between the companies in 1816 and was in 1814 under the charge of Mr. John Pritchard, afterwards Lord Selkirk's agent, and the father of a numerous family among our Red River settlers. It was from this locality that four hundred bags of pemican, each weighing 80 or 90 pounds, were seized from the Nor'-Westers by Governor Miles Macdonell's orders, to be paid for, however, for the use of the Selkirk colony; and it was to this Fort a la Souris that the loot was taken in 1816, when Brandon House was seized by the Nor'-Westers and Peter Fidler compelled to leave it. Forty-five miles from the mouth of the Souris, seemingly near its junction with Plum creek, was situated at the beginning of this century a fort named Ash House. Of this we know little; but, in subsequent years the Hudson's Bay Company maintained a winter port somewhere in this locality.

CONCLUSION.

Thus closes our sketch of the Souris River region, which in early mound building times was plainly well peopled, whose natural monuments are of continental reputation, whose mounds and intrenchments well repay study, and around whose forts far more adventure and trade centred up to Lord Selkirk's time than attach to the forts of Red River.

WINNIPEG:

MANITOBA- FREE PRESS COMPANY

1904

